

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XXII. No. 4.] LONDON, SATURDAY, JULY 25, 1812.

[Price 1s.]

"That the subjects which are Protestants, may have arms for their defence, suitable to their conditions, and as allowed by law."—DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

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THE LUDDITES, OR HISTORY OF THE SEALED BAG. No. III.

In the former Numbers I brought down this curious history to the appointment of the Committee of the House of Commons, to examine and report upon the contents of the SEALED BAG. I am now about to put upon record what has been the result of that examination; and, when I have so done, I shall offer such remarks upon the subject as appear to me likely to assist in causing the thing to be *seen* in its true light, and also to be *remembered* for what it has been. The people of this country have been led on by degrees to their present state. No people were ever so much changed all at once. If, twenty years ago, the people of England, who were then shouting for war, had been told what their state would be in twenty years from that time, they would have been ready, like Richard, to stab the prophet in the midst of his prophecy. If they had been told, that, before that war should end, they would be compelled to pay an income tax of ten per centum; that they would be subjected to laws of taxation such as those now in existence; that they would see German Troops brought into the heart of the country; that they would see the arms of a Local Militia put under the guard of regular soldiers; that they would see barracks erected in, or on the side of every considerable town; that they would see districts of England put under the command of German Officers; that they would see the Judges sitting at the assizes under the protection of regular soldiers; that they would see soldiers attending to protect the Sheriff and his officers at the execution of criminals; that they would see soldiers called in at an election for members to serve in parliament; and, finally, that they would see a law passed for DISARMING THE PEOPLE, or any considerable part of the people: if they had been told this, what would they

have said? Would they not have regarded the man, telling them so, as either a mad-man or one disposed to excite hatred against the government? Would not such a man have been prosecuted as a *sedition libeller*? Nay; how many Gentlemen, how many real friends of England and of English liberty, were prosecuted, and some of them utterly destroyed, for endeavouring to prevent the war, and to produce that reform, without which, as they then stated, it was impossible for England to avoid ruin? But, even their forebodings; even their notions of ruin fell far short of what we now have in the reality before our eyes.—Let the reader, therefore, prepare his mind for much more than he has yet seen. What is to be the end of the progress, in which we now are, no man can say, and I shall not pretend to conjecture; but, I beseech the reader to be prepared; and with this caution to him, I enter upon the continuation of the history of the sealed bag.—We before saw how the Secret Committee was *appointed*; and we have now to see its *report*. This report was laid before the House of Commons on the 8th instant, and, in substance, it is given as stating, "that alarming disturbances, destructive to property, prevailed in the counties of Lancaster, York, &c. and had continued from the month of March down to the latest accounts on the 23d of June. That the rioters assembled in the night-time, with their faces blackened, armed with the implements of their trades, and other offensive instruments, with which they destroyed the property of those who were obnoxious to them. That they had in many instances written threatening letters, had proceeded the length of setting fire to the houses of individuals, and even that an atrocious murder had been committed on a person of the name of Horsefall, by four persons, who there was every reason to believe were accomplices in these disturbances. That great dread and alarm was occasioned in consequence of these proceedings; and that,

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MINISTERIAL NEGOCIATIONS.

DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED, RELATING TO THE
LATE NEGOCIATIONS FOR MAKING A NEW
MINISTRY.

(Continued from page 64.)

Moirs acts. Personal communication with him will always be acceptable and honourable to us. But we hope he will be sensible, that no advantage is likely to result from pursuing this subject by unauthorized discussions, and in a course different from the usual practice.—Motives of obvious delicacy must prevent our taking any step towards determining the Prince Regent to authorize Lord Moira to address us personally. We shall always receive with dutiful submission his Royal Highness's commands, in whatever manner, and through whatever channel, he may be pleased to signify them, and we trust we shall never be found wanting in zeal for his Royal Highness's service, and for the public interest. But we cannot venture to suggest to his Royal Highness, through any other person, our opinions, on points in which his Royal Highness is not pleased to require our advice.

GREY.

GRENVILLE.

No. 28.—*Lord Moira to Lords Grey and Grenville, informing them, that he has the Prince Regent's authority to address them, and requesting to know, when and where he can see them.*

Lord Moira presents his best compliments to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville.—Discouraged, as he unavoidably must be, he yet cannot reconcile it to himself to leave any effort untried: and he adopts their principle for an interview, though he doubts if the desired conclusion is likely to be so well advanced by it, as would have been the case in the mode suggested by him.—He has now the Prince Regent's instructions to take steps towards the formation of a ministry; and is authorized specially to address himself to Lords Grey and Grenville. It is, therefore, his request to know, when and where he can wait upon them. He would wish to bring Lord Erskine with him.—*June 6, 1812. 11 forenoon.*

No. 29.—*Minute of a Conversation between Lord Moira and Lords Grey and Grenville, at which Lord Erskine was present.*
—*St. James's Place, June 6th, 1812.*

Lord Moira stated to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, that he was authorized by the Prince Regent to consult with them on the formation of a new government. And satisfactory explanations having taken place between them, respecting such measures as appeared to be of the greatest urgency at the present moment, more especially with reference to the situation of H. M.'s Roman Catholic subjects, and the differences now unhappily subsisting with America; and that Lord Moira had received this commission without any restriction or limitation whatever being laid by the Prince, on their considering any points which they judged useful for his service; they expressed their satisfaction with the fairness of this proposal, and their readiness to enter into such discussions as must precede the details of any new arrangement. As a preliminary question, which appeared to them of great importance, they thought it necessary immediately to bring forward, to prevent the inconvenience and embarrassment of the further delay which might be produced, if this negotiation should break off in a more advanced state, they asked, *whether this full liberty extended to the consideration of new appointments to those great offices of the household, which have been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of administration; intimating their opinion, that it would be necessary to act on the same principle on the present occasion.*—Lord Moira answered, *that the Prince had laid no restriction upon him in that respect, and had never pointed in the most distant manner at the protection of those officers from removal; that it would be impossible for him (Lord Moira), however, to concur in making the exercise of this power positive and indispensable, in the formation of the administration, because he should deem it on public grounds peculiarly objectionable.*—To this Lord Grey and Lord Grenville replied, they also acted on public grounds alone, and with no other feeling whatever
(To be continued.)

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“ in some instances, sums of money were
 “ demanded and extorted. The Commit-
 “ tee, without entering into details, thought
 “ it necessary to state, that the first object
 “ of these rioters seemed to be the breaking
 “ of machinery; but they had in many in-
 “ stances resorted to measures infinitely
 “ more alarming, namely, the demanding
 “ of arms; and had even carried them off,
 “ in many instances where they allowed
 “ every other species of property to remain
 “ untouched. These seemed not to be the
 “ effect of any sudden impulse, but of an
 “ organized system of lawless violence.
 “ Sometimes the rioters were under the
 “ control of leaders; and were distin-
 “ guished not by names but by numbers;
 “ were known to each other by signs and
 “ countersigns; and carried on all with the
 “ utmost caution. They also took an oath,
 “ that while they existed under the canopy
 “ of Heaven they would not reveal any thing
 “ connected with the present disturbances,
 “ under the penalty of being put out of ex-
 “ istence by the first brother whom they
 “ should meet, &c. It did not appear to
 “ the Committee that any sums of money
 “ were distributed among the rioters. It
 “ was extremely difficult to discover them.
 “ It was held out to them that they might
 “ expect to be joined by other discontented
 “ persons from London, and that there
 “ were *persons in the higher ranks* who
 “ would also lend them support; but of
 “ these insinuations the Committee were
 “ able to find *no evidence*. Whatever was
 “ their object, however, and whoever were
 “ the *secret movers* of these disturbances,
 “ yet the secrecy with which they were
 “ carried on, the attempts at assassination
 “ that had been made, the oaths that had
 “ been administered, and the system of ter-
 “ ror that prevailed, had not failed to im-
 “ press the Committee *deeply*.” — Deep-
 “ ly enough, no doubt; but there was, it
 “ seems, no evidence to prove a *setting on*;
 “ no evidence to prove a *plot*. And, this is
 “ the circumstance that will most puzzle the
 “ ministry. They can find no *agitators*.
 “ it is a movement of the *people's own*, as
 “ far as it goes; and, if the ministry say, that
 “ it does not arise from the dearness of provi-
 “ sions and from other causes of *distress*; if
 “ it does not arise from that source, it follows,
 “ that it must arise from *some dislike of what*
 “ *the government itself is doing or has done*;
 “ it follows, that the people are displeased
 “ with something in their rulers; and this is
 “ what is called *disaffection*. — There is a
 “ sad dilemma here for the eulogists of the

system. For, either it is a good system,
 or it is not: either it is calculated to make
 the people happy, or it is not: if the latter,
the system ought to be changed; if the for-
 mer, *the people are hostile to the govern-*
ment for hostility's sake; they, in this case,
 must hate the system under which they
 live. — I shall not undertake to say which
 is the case. It is not necessary. But, one
 or the other is the case; that I will say,
 and, in the assertion, I am warranted by
 irrefutable argument. The conclusion,
 either way, is mortifying enough to the
 pride of those, who began the war for the
 purpose of keeping democratical principles
 out of England, and who, at a later period,
exulted, with ARTHUR YOUNG, that nothing
 short of an *iron despotism* would be suffi-
 cient to keep order in France; and that,
 thus, the people of England would be *ter-*
rified from all thoughts of reform. This
 malignant, this diabolical idea is clearly
 and unreservedly expressed by Arthur
 Young, in his “Warning.” Yes; after
 having seen all France; after having wit-
 nessed, described, and inveighed against
 the oppressions and miseries under the old
 government of France, he exults at the
 prospect of seeing the people of France
 punished with an iron and everlasting des-
 potism; and *why*? Because they had put
 down for ever that old government, under
 which he had before said they were so
 grievously oppressed. — But, what have
 these sentiments of the Secretary of the
 Board of Agriculture to do with the subject
 before us? A great deal to do with it.
 For, we now see, that though the people
 of France were so far foiled by the English
 government and its allies as not to be able
 to establish freedom in France; though
 they have been, after all, compelled, for
 the sake of tranquillity and safety, to sub-
 mit to what they call monarchy, and what
 our hired writers call a military despotism;
 though the wish, the abominable, the fiend-
 like wish of Arthur Young and the Anti-
 Jacobins has been thus far, according to
 their own account, accomplished; though
 they assert that France labours under the
 most terrible of despotisms; still are they
 now compelled to confess, that there are a
 part, at least, of the people of England who
 have not taken the “Warning.” These
 people have seen all that has passed in
 France. They have seen it all, and yet
 they are, it seems, not afraid of *change*!
 Mr. Young must be greatly surprised at
 this. He must be greatly mortified to see
 his most charitable wish disappointed! —



Returning now more immediately to the subject; upon the above-mentioned *report* has been grounded a Bill, which is now before parliament. Of this Bill, which is intended as a *remedy* for the evils stated in the report, the chief feature is a power given to the Justices (who are all appointed *by the Crown*) to **DISARM THE PEOPLE** at their discretion, or, at least, so nearly at discretion, as to leave no room for a clearly defined exception.—There are other provisions in the Bill, which would be calculated to attract attention, if unaccompanied with that which I have just stated; but *this* is such a thumper, that it leaves no room for surprise or any other feeling at the rest. **DISARM THE PEOPLE!** Disarm the people of England! And **FOR WHAT?** No matter what. The fact is quite enough. The simple sentence stating this one fact will save foreign statesmen the trouble of making any inquiries relative to the internal state of England. It speaks whole volumes. A law is passing for taking the arms away from a part of the people of England! What can be added to this, in order to give Napoleon an adequate idea of our situation? Why, this: that **LORD CASTLEREAGH** is the man to propose the measure!—The whole of the act will be inserted by me hereafter, in order that it may be read in every country in the world; and, in the meanwhile, I shall content myself with a few remarks upon the debates, which took place, in the House of Commons, during the progress of the Bill; but, these I must postpone to my next, for subjects now present themselves, which, in point of *time*, demand a preference. None can equal it in point of intrinsic importance; because the *disarming of the people* is decisive of the character, not only of our present, but of our future situation; but, in point of *time*, there are subjects which are still more pressing.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

AMERICAN STATES.—A second American War seemed to be all that was wanted to complete the round of adventures in this jubilee reign; and this, it seems, we have now got. It was very hard to persuade people, that America would declare war. I begged of the Regent not to listen to those who affected to laugh at American hostility. I told him, in so many words, that we should have war, unless we redressed the grievances that America complained of. Scarcely any body could be

prevailed upon to believe this; but it is come true, it seems, after all. The Anti-Jacobins will not believe me; they despise my warnings; and they pay for it in the end. Not only the public, but the government, in England, wholly disbelieved that the Americans would go to war. The truth is, that there are so many newspapers in England, whose sole purpose is to deceive the public, that the wonder is, that any truth at all ever gains general belief.—There has, however, been an extraordinary degree of obstinacy as to the real intention of America with regard to war. Nothing could induce people to believe that she would go to war. I asserted and proved, as I thought, that it was naturally to be expected that she would go to war, unless we did away the Orders in Council and also the Impressment of American Seamen; but, scarcely a soul would believe. Perhaps, it may be good for the cause of freedom that I was not believed! —But, let us now quit the past, and look a little to the future.—What will take place now? The letter, or pretended letter, from Liverpool, under the date of the 18th instant, would make this cheated nation believe, that, the moment the news arrives of the repeal of the Orders in Council, *the quarrel with America will be at an end.* —It will be best, however, to let the letter speak for itself.—“I have to advise you, that a pilot-boat is arrived here to-day from New York, which she left on the 23d ult., bringing an account that the Senate, after deliberating seven days, had come to the resolution of declaring war against Great Britain, 19 to 13. An express had arrived at New York to Major Bloomfield, which he read at the head of his army, formally announcing that the United States had declared war against Great Britain.—I think it proper to add, however, that the houses in New York which dispatched the pilot with this information, for the purpose of making speculations in produce, expressly ordered that, should the Orders in Council be revoked, their friends here were on no account to make any purchases for them.—This is a *convincing proof* that this Declaration of War will be *short lived*, and on the arrival of the Gazette, containing the revocation of the Orders in Council, all matters in dispute between the two countries will be amicably settled. The Mackarel schooner had been dispatched from New York by Mr. Foster, direct to Falmouth the day before

“the pilot-boat sailed. When the Senate came to the resolution of declaring war, *the account of Mr. Perceval's death had not reached Washington*, but was known at New York.”—Thus a new falsehood is to be set on foot. We are now to believe, that the declaration of war is *to have no effect*. Till now it has been asserted, distinctly asserted, that the SENATE had *rejected* the proposition for war. This, as the reader well knows, has been stated most distinctly, with all the circumstances attending the fact. It was not only asserted, that the Senate had rejected the proposition, but the number of the majority against the motion was given to this deceived, this cheated, this insulted nation. In the Courier news-paper of the 17th instant was published the following paragraph:—“We stop the press to state, that we have just learned, that on a motion made in the House of Representatives for declaring war against Great Britain, the question was carried by a large majority; but on being brought up to the Senate, it was REJECTED by a majority of Two.”—This was published on the 17th of July, and, on the 20th, the above letter from Liverpool.—Now, upon what *authority* was the first statement made? Clearly upon no authority at all. It was a falsehood; a falsehood intended to deceive the people of England; a falsehood intended to cheat them; a falsehood intended to answer most base and yet most foolish purposes; for, on the 20th, out comes the truth by sheer force. I have heard a gentleman say, that he verily believed, that, if the French were at Dover, half a million strong, these same news-papers would represent Napoleon as at the last gasp. I hardly believe that; for, by the time he was safely landed, they would be considering of the means of going over to his side, and would, in their own minds, be settling as to their price. But, short of a crisis like that, there is nothing that will induce them to desist from persevering in falsehood to *the very moment of detection*. To the very moment! They know well, that a few weeks, days, or hours, must expose their falsehoods to the public; but, they know also, that, for those weeks, days, or hours, the falsehoods answer their purpose. And, when one falsehood is worn out, they have another. Thus it is, that this nation is deceived; it is thus that it is more deceived than any other nation upon earth; and that, at last, when a calamity comes upon it, it seems to be thunderstruck at

what all the rest of the world clearly foresaw. It is thus, too, more than by any other means, that the country has been brought into its present humbled and distressed state. The people have always been believing pretty nearly the contrary of truth while the event was coming. The result has, in almost every case, been precisely the opposite of what was expected; and the world have thought the people of England mad for their silly expectations; but, if the world knew the means that are used to make the people of England believe falsehoods instead of truth; if the world knew, that the people of England, *during the progress* of any expedition or other war-like undertaking, for instance, hear nothing but falsehoods respecting it, the world would not be surprised at the disappointment of the people of England at the result.—These observations apply with peculiar force to the dispute with America, who has been represented to the people of England as being, even *now*, wholly incapable of going to war, and whose government has been represented as acting contrary to the sense of the people in all its acts of resistance against England. Now, however, we are at war, if the above news be true; and even now new falsehoods are attempted to be palmed upon us.—But, does the reader not perceive, that, if America has *declared war*, she is *at war*? And that, if she is *at war*, there must be a *treaty* before there can be a *peace*? To make a treaty of peace will require some months, at any rate; and, does the reader suppose, that the Americans, after the expense of arming has been encountered, will disarm, till she has obtained satisfaction upon *all* the points at issue? The acts of aggression (as she considers them) on our part are many; and does the reader suppose, that the mere news of the repeal of the Orders in Council will satisfy her?—Besides, if there were no subject of disagreement but that of the Orders in Council, does not the reader perceive, that the repeal has not been *full*, and *complete*, and *unqualified*; and that, if it were so, America cannot be expected to disarm without some sort of compensation? What! Is our government to commit upon the Americans whatever acts of aggression it pleases; and, after that, when America arms and declares war, are we to suppose, that, to effect an instant peace, we have nothing to do but to *put a stop* to our aggressions? I do not take upon me to assert, that they are *aggressions*; but, sup-

posing them to be such, as I really *think* they are, does the reader suppose, that our government possess a license to commit acts of aggression, and to put forward its mere *cessation* of them as a ground for peace with the offended party? This is not the way with our government, either abroad or at home. It is always talking of "*indemnity for the past and security for the future*;" and, why are we to suppose that the American Government will not talk in the same way? If a man offend our government, does it say, "cease to offend us, and there is an end of the matter?" No: this is not the language it is now making use of to the people in the Luddite counties. It punishes them, when it can catch them; and shall it lay it down as a maxim, that it is never to be made responsible for what it does?—The reader may be assured, that the Americans do not consider it as exempted from the usual laws and principles by which nations regulate their conduct towards each other; and, he may be further assured, that the inquiries relative to the state of our manufacturers will not, when read in America, tend to lower her tone.—She is now armed; she has got over her great reluctance to enlist soldiers and to fit out armed vessels; and, she will, in my opinion, never lay down her arms, that is to say, she will never make peace with us, until we agree to make her ample compensation for her losses and injuries under the Orders in Council, and also agree to desist from impressing any persons on board her ships at sea.—Are we prepared for this? Are the associates of Perceval ready to give up these points? Are they ready to pay for what has been captured under regulations, which the Americans regard as a violation of their rights; and are they ready to make it a crime in any English officer to seize seamen on board American ships at sea? If they are, we shall certainly soon be at peace with America; if they are not, my opinion is, that we shall have war with her, till those points are given up.—The close of the pretended Letter from Liverpool is curious. It observes that, "when the Senate came to the resolution of declaring war, *the account of Mr. Perceval's death had not reached Washington.*"—As much as to say, that if the news of his death *had* reached Washington, war might *not* have been declared! And this is the way in which the *friends* of the little dead lawyer speak of him, is it? They leave us clearly to infer, that

the news of his death; the bare news of his death, might have *prevented a war with America!* And yet have these same writers the impudence to call the people of Nottingham, and other places, *monsters* because they expressed their joy upon receiving that same news!—In conclusion, I beg the reader to bear in mind, that I have been nearly two years endeavouring to prevent a war with America; that, very soon after I was sentenced to be imprisoned two years in Newgate and to pay a thousand pounds to the King, for writing about the flogging of English Local Militia-men at the town of Ely and about the employing of German Troops upon that occasion; I beg the reader to bear in mind, that, very soon after that imprisonment commenced, I began my most earnest endeavours to prevent this war, the most fatal, I fear, of all the many wars in which we have been engaged, since the present King mounted the throne. I was enabled to tell pretty exactly what would come to pass, unless we redressed the grievances of America without delay. I had letters from America, written by persons of a little more understanding than appears to be possessed by those from whom our lawyers get their information. I did not know to what extent the merchants of America might submit to have their property seized; but I was well assured, that the American people would no longer suffer their seamen to be impressed upon the open sea. This I was positively told nearly two years ago; and, I am now particularly anxious to impress it upon the minds of the ministers; for, they may be *assured*, that the American Government, if it has actually declared war, will never make peace till that point is settled to the satisfaction of the American people; till, in short, we agree to desist wholly from taking any person whatever out of an American ship *at sea*.—I am aware how stinging it will be to *some persons* in England to yield one jot to America. I am aware how much more they hate her government than they hate that of France. I am aware how glad they would be to hear of the United States being swallowed up by an earthquake. Not so, however, *the people* of England generally, who do not grudge any thing that is yielded to America so much as they do what is yielded to other powers. They do not, besides, see very clearly the *advantages* they are to derive from the *keeping down of the Americans by the means of the English navy*. They do

not see the benefit that is likely to accrue to them from any thing, the tendency of which is to press upon a free people in another country. Nothing, I am convinced, will ever make an American war popular in England.

FRENCH OVERTURES FOR PEACE.—This is a subject of great importance. Not so great as that of disarming the people of English counties, but, certainly, of very great importance. *Peace and Reform* are necessary to England; they are now become necessary to her happiness and even to her safety. When, therefore, another offer of peace has been made to us, it behoves us to inquire what were the *terms* proposed.—In another part of this Number I have inserted the letter of the Duke of Bassano, containing the proposition of the Emperor Napoleon, and also the answer of Lord Castlereagh.—The proposition has been represented as unfair, insidious, and I know not what besides; but, in my opinion, a proposition more fair, more frank, and, the circumstances considered, more *moderate*, never was made by one nation to another at the opening of a negotiation. The basis is, each party shall keep in peace the territories of which the other has not been able to deprive him by war. This is the proposed basis; or, at least, it is the main stone of it. And, what can be more fair; what more explicit or comprehensive; what more reasonable? To reject a basis like this is to proclaim a disposition to continue war, without end and without object.—But, it is, it may be said to other parts of the overture, that Lord Castlereagh objects. He objects to the leaving of Spain in the hands of King Joseph. This point has already cost us four years of war at the rate of about 20,000,000 of pounds a year, and how many *men* it has cost I cannot even venture to guess. Eighty millions of money is, however, something; and, it would seem that we are very far indeed from being at the end of the account.—The overture of Napoleon is, by Lord Castlereagh, understood to mean, that, as to Spain, the present king, Joseph is to reign there; and, this being the case, the Prince Regent cannot consent to treat, because he “owes it to his honour,” because he is bound by treaty to Ferdinand and his Cortes. Really I do not see how he can be so bound. Ferdinand has lived in France ever since the war began in Spain. I am at a loss to imagine how *he* can be said to have any

treaty at all with us. If we look upon his abdication in favour of Napoleon as nothing at all, still we must know that the man is in France; we must know that he has never received any Ambassador from England; that he has signed no treaty, and that he has, in fact, no power whatever as a king. Besides, *who made him a king?* How came he to be considered king of Spain? His father is alive; and, while he lives, how can his son be king? Why, they tell us, that the king, his father, *abdicated* the throne in favour of his son. But, the father has since declared, in the most public and solemn manner, that, in abdicating, he yielded to fear; that the abdication was extorted from him at the peril of his life, and, upon that ground he resumed his crown.—Besides, if the right of Ferdinand will stand upon the ground of an abdication in his favour, why will not the right of Napoleon stand upon the same ground, since we know well, that Ferdinand abdicated the throne in favour of Napoleon; If abdication is to hold good in the one case, why not in the other? If Ferdinand can acquire a crown by the abdication of its possessor, why can he not dispose of it in the same way?—It has been said, that the abdication was *extorted* from Ferdinand; but, we have not heard that *he himself* has made any such complaint. It is our kind and generous government that makes the complaint for him. But, at any rate, it was but extorting from him that which his own father had accused him of having extorted. If Ferdinand, in the face of his father's protest, had a right to possess the crown, surely any one to whom he might make it over could not fail in his right of possession.—So much for the *legitimacy* of Ferdinand's rights. This, however, is a trifle compared with the design, now clearly developed, of continuing the war *though Portugal is offered to be guaranteed to the House of Braganza*. What could we expect more than this? This seemed, at one time, to be an object beyond our hopes; and now when the enemy offers it to us, and offers besides to leave us in possession of all the French and Dutch and Danish Islands, containing about 35 millions of inhabitants, nearly twice the number that France has added to her subjects; when the independence of Sicily is offered to be guaranteed; and when the Emperor offers to leave us in quiet possession of Malta; aye, of that MALTA, which was the cause, and the sole professed cause, of this war of Trojan duration; when even

Malta is offered to be left to us, our government declines to treat, it rejects the overture, *for the sake of Ferdinand and his Cortes!*—When, then, are we to have peace? We have it now in our power to see Portugal independent of the French, to see Sicily in a state to dispense with the aid of an English army and an English subsidy; and, at the same time, we may retain possession of all the immense conquests that we have made during the war, all the French and Dutch settlements in all parts of the world. In short, Napoleon gives up to us three quarters of the globe, *excepting the American States*, which are not his to give.—I shall be told, perhaps, that the *guaranteeing* of the independence of Portugal and of Sicily would be of no use; for, that the enemy would seize on them in peace, or declare war again for the purpose, as soon as our troops were withdrawn. This is possible; but, then, he who tells me this, must recollect that his argument goes to establish the necessity of eternal war, or, at least, war to the extermination of Napoleon, and of all those who shall possess his power and act upon his policy; for, the same possibility will exist next year as well as this year, and every year as long as the power and territories of the French empire shall remain what they now are.—The truth is, that the terms offered as a basis of peace are fair and reasonable, and, for a first offer, very moderate; but, our government appears to be *afraid of peace*. It is obviously afraid, that guarantees would be useless in behalf of Sicily and Portugal; it is afraid that Napoleon would seize on them the moment our troops should be withdrawn, and it feels that it would have no power to punish him for so doing! There's the rub! The great, the giant power of France; the intrinsic strength of that empire; this it is that frightens our government, and makes those who have the management of it alarmed at the idea of peace; and this giant power has been created by those coalitions against republicanism, of which England was the soul.—Were not this the case it would be impossible for any set of ministers to think for one moment of rejecting an offer like that contained in the letter of the Duke of Bassano, which offer, as I observed before, gives up all that we have ever contended for, except Spain; and, if it be said, that Spain in family alliance with France would be dangerous to us, let it be borne in mind, that Spain has been

in that state for more than a century, and that, even at the *last peace*, the peace of Amiens, Spain was so completely in alliance with France, that the latter *negotiated for her*.—If not, then, with an offer such as is now made us; if we have now no chance of peace, when are we to hope for it? If we are not to have peace till the giant power of France is *reduced*, who amongst us can reasonably hope to see peace again?—I shall return to this subject in my next.

BRISTOL ELECTION.—This contest is, for the present, at an end. It has been decided against MR. HUNT by a large majority; but, let it be borne in mind, that the election has been carried on under the "*protection*" of *soldiers*. This is a perfect novelty, even in this age of novelties.—That there will be another election is certain; for, unless there be, there is an end, at once, to even the slightest show of the elective franchise.—The nation is indebted to the people of Bristol for the stand that they have made against corrupt influence; and the people of Bristol are indebted to Mr. Hunt for having been enabled to make that stand; they are indebted to him, and to him alone, for having had AN ELECTION, or any thing in the shape of an election.—I shall, in my next, when in full possession of all the facts relating to this glorious struggle against corruption, put those facts upon record in a way that I think most likely to give them the best chance of producing effect.

ENGLISH LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.—It appears to me to be necessary to put upon record, in a compact form, all the principal facts relating to the prosecution carried on against me, and the punishment inflicted upon me.—I shall now state these facts here; and, in my next, and in *every future Number* of the Register, if it continue to be published as long as I live, it shall form the *last page*; so that, in time, it may be read by every man in every country where the English language is understood; and so that it may, if people choose, be cut off, and pasted upon walls or other places.—I have confined myself to bare facts; facts which nobody can deny. I have had recourse to no colouring at all. Here are the unvarnished facts, and let every man form his own judgment upon them.

ENGLISH LIBERTY OF THE PRESS,
*As illustrated in the Prosecution and
 Punishment of*
 WILLIAM COBBETT.

In order that my countrymen and that the world may not be deceived, duped, and cheated upon this subject, I, WILLIAM COBBETT, of Botley, in Hampshire, put upon record the following facts; to wit: That, on the 24th June, 1809, the following article was published in a London news-paper, called the *COURIER*:—

“The Mutiny amongst the LOCAL MILITIA, which broke out at Ely, was
 “*fortunately* suppressed on Wednesday,
 “by the arrival of four squadrons of the
 “GERMAN LEGION CAVALRY from
 “Bury, under the command of General
 “Auckland. Five of the ringleaders were
 “tried by a Court-Martial, and *sentenced*
 “to receive 500 lashes each, part of which
 “punishment they received on Wednesday,
 “day, and a part was remitted. *A stop-*
 “*page for their knapsacks* was the ground
 “of the complaint that excited this muti-
 “nous spirit, which occasioned the men to
 “surround their officers, and demand what
 “they deemed their arrears. The first di-
 “vision of the German Legion halted yes-
 “terday at Newmarket on their return to
 “Bury.”—That, on the 1st July, 1809, I published, in the Political Register, an article censuring, in the strongest terms, these proceedings; that, for so doing, the Attorney General prosecuted, as seditious libellers, and by Ex-Officio Information, me, and also my printer, my publisher, and one of the principal retailers of the Political Register; that I was brought to trial on the 15th June, 1810, and was, by a Special Jury, that is to say, by 12 men out of 48 appointed by the Master of the Crown Office, found guilty; that, on the 20th of the same month, I was compelled to give bail for my appearance to receive judgment; and that, as I came up from Botley (to which place I had returned to my family and my farm on the evening of the 15th), a Tipstaff went down from London in order to seize me, personally; that, on the 9th of July, 1810, I, together with my printer, publisher, and the newsman, were brought into the Court of King’s Bench to receive judgment; that the three former were sentenced to be imprisoned for some months in the King’s Bench prison; that I was sentenced to be imprisoned for two years in Newgate, the great receptacle for malefactors, and the front of which is the scene of

numerous hangings in the course of every year; that the part of the prison in which I was sentenced to be confined is sometimes inhabited by felons, that felons were actually in it at the time I entered it; that one man was taken out of it to be transported in about 48 hours after I was put into the same yard with him; and that it is the place of confinement for men guilty of unnatural crimes, of whom there are four in it at this time; that, besides this imprisonment, I was sentenced to pay a thousand pounds TO THE KING, and to give security for my good behaviour for seven years, myself in the sum of 3,000 pounds, and two sureties in the sum of 1,000 pounds each; that the whole of this sentence has been executed upon me, that I have been imprisoned the two years, have paid the thousand pounds TO THE KING, and have given the bail, Timothy Brown and Peter Walker, Esqrs. being my sureties; that the Attorney General was Sir Vicary Gibbs, the Judge who sat at the trial Lord Ellenborough, the four Judges who sat at passing sentence Ellenborough, Grose, Le Blanc, and Bailey; and that the jurors were, Thomas Rhodes of Hampstead Road, John Davis of Southampton Place, James Ellis of Tottenham Court Road, John Richards of Bayswater, Thomas Marsham of Baker Street, Robert Heathcote of High Street Marylebone, John Maud of York Place Marylebone, George Baxter of Church Terrace Pancras, Thomas Taylor of Red Lion Square, David Deane of St. John Street, William Palmer of Upper Street Islington, Henry Favre of Pall Mall; that the Prime Ministers during the time were Spencer Perceval, until he was shot by John Bellingham, and after that Robert B. Jenkinson, Earl of Liverpool; that the prosecution and sentence took place in the reign of King George the Third, and that, he having become insane during my imprisonment, the 1,000 pounds was paid to his son, the Prince Regent, in his behalf; that, during my imprisonment, I wrote and published 364 Essays and Letters upon political subjects; that, during the same time, I was visited by persons from 197 cities and towns, many of them as a sort of deputies from Societies or Clubs; that, at the expiration of my imprisonment, on the 9th of July, 1812, a great dinner was given in London for the purpose of receiving me, at which dinner upwards of 600 persons were present, and at which Sir Francis Burdett presided; that dinners and other parties were held on the same occasion in many other places in England; that, on my way

home, I was received at Alton, the first town in Hampshire, with the ringing of the Church bells; that a respectable company met me and gave me a dinner at Winchester; that I was drawn from more than the distance of a mile into Botley by the people; that, upon my arrival in the village, I found all the people assembled to receive me; that I concluded the day by explaining to them the cause of my imprisonment, and by giving them clear notions respecting the flogging of the Local Militia-men at Ely, and respecting the employment of German Troops; and, finally, which is more than a compensation for my losses and all my sufferings, I am in perfect health and strength, and, though I must, for the sake of six children, feel the diminution that has been made in my property (thinking it right in me to decline the offer of a subscription), I have the consolation to see growing up three sons, upon whose hearts, I trust, all these facts will be engraven.

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, July 23, 1812.

TO MR. RICHARD KITTLE, OF NORWICH.

Dear Sir,

I have this moment received your letter of the 19th, informing me, that you, and other friends of freedom and enemies of corruption, have fixed on the 3d day of August next for giving me a dinner at the White Swan in your city, and that you intend to advertise in both the Norwich papers to that effect. By this time you will have received a letter from me, containing the reasons for my at present foregoing the very great honour which I was before informed you intended me; but, as I owe a similar explanation to all our friends in and near your public-spirited city, I here repeat, that I found my farm so imperiously to demand my presence, especially at this important season of the year, and with a sense of my recent losses in my mind, and prudence dictating, at the same time, the removal of my family from a gentleman's house to a farm house, that I could not bring myself to resolve to leave home, anxious as I was to see and shake by the hand the friends of freedom at Norwich. If the object of my absence had been the rendering of some greater service to the cause of freedom than I could render by remaining at home, the reasons I have given would not have been a sufficient apology for the disappointment I shall occasion; but, as the object would have been no other

than the receiving of a self-gratification, I trust that you and all our friends will have the goodness to accept, in the lieu of the personal attendance, the most sincere thanks for your kind intention, and an assurance that I shall always esteem it amongst the best compensations for the losses and the sufferings of your faithful friend,

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, July 23, 1812.

MINISTERIAL NEGOCIATIONS.

DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED, RELATING TO THE
LATE NEGOCIATIONS FOR MAKING A NEW
MINISTRY.

(Continued from page 96.)

than that which arose from the necessity of giving to a new government that character of efficiency and stability, and those marks of the constitutional support of the crown, which were required to enable it to act usefully for the public service; and that on these grounds it appeared to them indispensable, that the connexion of the great offices of the court with the political administration should be clearly established in its first arrangements,—A decided difference of opinion as to this point having been thus expressed on both sides, the conversation ended here, with mutual declarations of regret.—Nothing was said on the subject of official arrangements, nor any persons proposed on either side to fill any particular situations.

B. and C. Two Letters (which passed between Lords Moira and Grey) subjoined for the purpose of throwing light on the ground of part of these transactions. (B.)
—May 31st, 1812.

My dear Lord,—A just anxiety not to leave any thing subject to misunderstanding, must excuse me if I am troublesome to you. Since I quitted you, the necessity of being precise in terms has occurred to me: and, although I think I cannot have mistaken you, I wish to know if I am accurate in what I apprehend you to have said. I understood the position, stated by you as having been what you advanced in the House of Lords, to be this, “That pledges had been given to the Catholics, a departure from which rendered their present disappointment more galling; and that you said this in the hearing of persons who could contradict you if you

"were inaccurate." Just say whether I have taken your expression correctly or not.

MOIRA.

(C.)—*Holland House, May 31, 1812.*

My dear Lord,—I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kind anxiety to procure an accurate statement of the words spoken by me in the House of Lords. It is difficult to remember precise expressions so long after they were spoken; but I am sure I cannot be far wrong in stating the substance of what I said, as follows:—I was speaking on the subject of the Irish Catholics, and particularly on the charge of intemperate conduct which had been made against them. I stated, that great allowances were to be made for this, considering their repeated disappointments; and I cited, as instances of these, the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the Union. I then said, that the most distinct and authentic pledges had been given to them, of the Prince's wish to relieve them from the disabilities of which they complained; that I spoke in the hearing of persons who could contradict me if what I said was unfounded, and who would, I was sure, support its truth if questioned; that now, when the fulfilment of these pledges was confidently expected, to see an Administration continued in power, which stood on the express principle of resisting their claims, was, perhaps, the bitterest disappointment they had yet experienced; and that it was not surprising, if, under such circumstances, they felt, and acted, in a way that all well wishers to the peace of the empire must regret.—This I give as the substance, and by no means as a correct repetition of the particular expressions used by me; and this statement I can neither retract, nor endeavour to explain away. If, in consequence of it, the Prince feels a strong personal objection to me, I can only repeat, what I have already said to you, that I am perfectly ready to stand out of the way; that my friends shall have my full concurrence and approbation in taking office without me, and my most cordial support in the government of the country, if their measures are directed, as I am sure they must always be, by the principles on which we have acted together.—I write this from Lord Holland's, in a great hurry, and in the middle of dinner; but I was unwilling to defer, even for a minute, to answer an inquiry, which I feel to be prompted by so friendly a solicitude for me. I have not the means of taking a copy of this letter.

I shall therefore be obliged to you to let me have one; and I am sure, if, upon recollection, I shall think it necessary to add any thing to what I have now said, you will allow me an opportunity of doing so.

GREY.

PUBLIC PAPERS.

ENGLAND and FRANCE.—*Overtures for Peace by the Emperor Napoleon.*

Copy of a Letter addressed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to His Britannic Majesty.—Paris, April 17, 1812.

Sir,—His Majesty, constantly actuated by sentiments friendly to moderation and peace, is pleased again to make a solemn and sincere attempt to put an end to the miseries of war.—The awful circumstances in which the world is at present placed, have induced a resolution in the mind of his Majesty, the result of which has been to authorize me to explain to you, Sir, his views and intentions.—Many changes have taken place in Europe for the last ten years, which have been the necessary consequence of the war between France and England, and many more changes will be effected by the same cause. The particular character which the war has assumed, may add to the extent and duration of these results. Exclusive and arbitrary principles cannot be combated but by an opposition without measure or end; and the system of preservation and resistance should have the same character of universality, perseverance, and vigour.—The peace of Amiens, if it had been observed, would have prevented much confusion.—I heartily wish that the experience of the past may not be lost for the future.—His Majesty has often stopped when the most certain triumphs lay before him, and turned round to invoke peace.—In 1805, secure as he was by the advantages of his situation, and in spite of the confidence which he might reasonably feel in anticipations which Fortune was about to realize, he made proposals to his Britannic Majesty, which were rejected, on the ground that Russia should be consulted. In 1808, new proposals were made, in concert with Russia. England alleged the necessity of an intervention, which could be no more than the result of the negotiation itself. In 1810, his Majesty, having clearly discerned that the

British Orders in Council of 1807, rendered the conduct of the war incompatible with the independence of Holland, caused indirect overtures to be made towards procuring the return of peace. They were fruitless, and the consequence was, that new Provinces were united to the Empire.

—In the present time are to be found united all the circumstances of the various periods at which his Majesty manifested the pacific sentiments which he now orders me again to declare that he is actuated by.

—The calamities under which Spain, and the vast regions of Spanish America suffer, should naturally excite the interest of all nations, and inspire them with an equal anxiety for their termination.—I will express myself, Sir, in a manner which your Excellency will find conformable to the sincerity of the step which I am authorized to take; and nothing will better evince the sincerity and sublimity of it than the precise terms of the language which I have been directed to use. What views and motives should induce me to envelope myself in formalities suitable to weakness, which alone can find its interest in deceit?—The affairs of the Peninsula and the Two Sicilies are the points of difference which appear least to admit of being adjusted. I am authorized to propose to you an arrangement of them on the following basis:—The integrity of Spain shall be guaranteed. France shall renounce all idea of extending her dominions beyond the Pyrennees. The present dynasty shall be declared independent, and Spain shall be governed by a National Constitution of her Cortes.—The independence and integrity of Portugal shall be also guaranteed, and the House of Braganza shall have the Sovereign authority.—The kingdom of Naples shall remain in possession of the present Monarch, and the kingdom of Sicily shall be guaranteed to the present family of Sicily.—As a consequence of these stipulations, Spain, Portugal, and Sicily shall be evacuated by the French and English land and naval forces.—With respect to the other objects of discussion, they may be negotiated upon this basis, that each power shall retain that of which the other could not deprive it by war.—Such are, Sir, the grounds of conciliation offered by his Majesty to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent.—His Majesty the Emperor and King, in taking this step, does not look either to the advantages or losses which this Empire may derive from the war, if it should be prolonged; he is

influenced simply by the considerations of the interests of humanity, and the peace of his people, and if this fourth attempt should not be attended with success, like those which have preceded it, France will at least have the consolation of thinking, that whatever blood may yet flow, will be justly imputable to England alone.—I have the honour, &c.

THE DUKE OF BASSANO.

Copy of the Answer of Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of His Britannic Majesty, to the Letter of the Minister for Foreign Relations, of the 17th of April, 1812.—London, Office for Foreign Affairs, April 23, 1812.

Sir,—Your Excellency's Letter of the 17th of this month has been received and laid before the Prince Regent.—His Royal Highness felt that he owed it to his honour, before he should authorize me to enter into any explanation upon the overture which your Excellency has transmitted, to ascertain the precise meaning attached by the Government of France to the following passage of your Excellency's Letter, the 'actual Dynasty shall be declared independent, and Spain governed by the national Constitution of the Cortes.'—If, as his Royal Highness fears, the meaning of this proposition is, that the Royal authority of Spain, and the Government established by the Cortes, shall be recognized as residing in the brother of the head of the French Government, and the Cortes formed under his authority, and not in the legitimate Sovereign, Ferdinand the Seventh, and his heirs, and the Extraordinary Assembly of the Cortes, now invested with the power of the Government in that kingdom, in his name, and by his authority—I am commanded frankly and explicitly to declare to your Excellency, that the obligations of good faith do not permit his Royal Highness to receive a proposition for peace founded on such a basis.—But if the expressions cited above, apply to the actual government of Spain, which exercises the Sovereign authority in the name of Ferdinand the VIIth, upon an assurance of your Excellency to that effect, the Prince Regent will feel himself disposed to enter into a full explanation upon the basis which has been transmitted, in order to be taken into consideration by his Royal Highness; and it being his most earnest wish to contribute, in concert with his Allies, to the repose of Europe, and to bring about a peace, which may be at once honourable, not only for

Great Britain and France, but also for those States which are in relations of amity with each of these Powers.—Having made known without reserve the sentiments of the Prince Regent, with respect to a point on which it is necessary to have a full understanding, previous to any ulterior discussion, I shall adhere to the instructions of his Royal Highness, by avoiding all superfluous comment and recrimination on the accessory objects of your letter. I might advantageously for the justification of the conduct observed by Great Britain at the different periods alluded to by your Excellency, refer to the correspondence which then took place, and to the judgment which the world has long since formed of it.—As to the particular character the war has unhappily assumed, and the arbitrary principles which your Excellency conceives to have marked its progress, denying, as I do, that these evils are attributable to the British Government, I at the same time can assure your Excellency, that it sincerely deplores their existence, as uselessly aggravating the calamities of war, and that its most anxious desire, whether at peace or war with France, is to have the relations of the two countries restored to the liberal principles usually acted upon in former times.—I take this opportunity of assuring your Excellency of my respect.

CASTLEREAGH.

FRANCE AND RUSSIA.—*Correspondence relative to the Dispute of 1812.*

Copy of a Note addressed by the Minister of Foreign Relations to Count Romanzow, Chancellor of Russia. Paris, April 25, 1812.

Count—His Majesty the Emperor of Russia had acknowledged at Tilsit the principle, that the present generation should not have looked to the enjoyment of happiness, but on the ground that the nations in the full enjoyment of their rights might give themselves up freely to the exercise of their industry; that the independence of their flag should be inviolable; that the independence of their flag was a right belonging to each of them, and its protection a reciprocal duty of the one towards the other; that they were not less bound to protect the inviolability of their flag, than that of their territory; that if a Power cannot, without ceasing to be neuter, allow its territory to be taken away by one of the Belligerent Powers, so neither can it remain neuter, in permitting to be taken

away from under the protection of its flag, by one of the Belligerent Powers, the property which the other has placed there; that all Powers consequently have the right of exacting, that nations, pretending to neutrality, should cause their flag to be respected in the same manner as they enforce respect to their territory; that so long as England, persisting in its system of war, should disavow the independence of any flag upon the seas, no Power, which is possessed of coast, can be neuter with respect to England.—With that penetration and elevation of sentiment by which he is distinguished, the Emperor Alexander also perceived that there could not be any prosperity for the Continental States, but in the establishment of their rights by a maritime peace. This great interest was predominant in the Treaty of Tilsit, and every thing else was the immediate result of it.—The Emperor Alexander offered his mediation to the English Government, and engaged, if this Government would not consent to conclude peace upon the principle of acknowledging that the flags of all Powers should enjoy an equal and perfect independence upon the seas, to make common cause with France, to summon, in concert with her, the three Courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon, to close their ports against the English, to declare war against England, and to insist upon the adoption of the same measure by the various Powers.—The Emperor Napoleon accepted of the mediation of Russia, but the answer of England was a violation of the rights of nations, till then unexampled in history. She, in the midst of peace, and without any preliminary declaration of war, attacked Denmark, surprised her capital, burned her arsenals, and took possession of her fleet, which was dismantled and lying secure in her ports. Russia, in conformity to the stipulations and principles of the Treaty of Tilsit, declared war against England; proclaimed anew the principles of the armed neutrality; and engaged never to swerve from this system. Here the British Cabinet threw off the mask, by issuing, in the month of November, 1807, those Orders in council, by virtue of which England levied a toll of from four to five millions upon the continent; and she compelled the flag of every Power to submit to the regulations which were the result of her principles of legislation. Thus, on the one side, she made war upon all Europe; and, on the other, she secured to herself the

means of perpetuating the duration of that war, by founding her financial system upon the tributes which she arrogated to herself—a right of imposing upon all people.—Already in 1806, and while France was at war with Prussia and Russia, she had proclaimed a blockade which had placed under an interdict the entire coast of an empire. When His Majesty entered Berlin, he answered this monstrous presumption by a Decree of blockade against the British Isles. But to meet the Orders in Council of 1807, more direct and specific measures were necessary; and His Majesty, by the Decree of Milan, of the 17th of December of the same year, declared all those flags denationalized which should permit their neutrality to be violated by submitting to those Orders.—The attempt on Copenhagen had been sudden and public. England had prepared in Spain new attempts, hatched with reflection and in the dark.—Not having been able to shake the determination of Charles IV., she formed a party against that Prince, who would not sacrifice to her the interests of his kingdom. She used the name of the Prince of the Asturias, and the father was driven from his throne by the name of the son. The enemies of France and the partisans of England took possession of the Sovereign authority.—His Majesty, called upon by Charles the Fourth, sent troops into Spain, and war was commenced in the Peninsula.—By one of the stipulations of Tilsit, Russia was to evacuate Wallachia and Moldavia. This evacuation was deferred—new revolutions, which had taken place at Constantinople, had several times bathed in blood the walls of the Seraglio.—Thus scarcely a year had elapsed from the peace of Tilsit—the affairs of Copenhagen, of Constantinople, and the Orders in Council, published in 1807, in England, had placed Europe in so unlooked-for a situation, that the two Sovereigns thought proper to come to an understanding, and the interview at Erfurth took place.—With the same designs, and inspired by the same spirit which had directed their proceedings at Tilsit, they agreed as to what exacted from them such considerable changes. The Emperor consented to withdraw his troops from Russia, and at the same time consented that Russia should not only evacuate Wallachia and Moldavia, but that she should unite these provinces to her empire.—The two Sovereigns, inspired with one and the same desire of re-establishing a

maritime peace, and then as much disposed as at Tilsit to defend those principles for the defence of which they had entered into an alliance, resolved to make a solemn application to England. You, Count, came, in consequence, to Paris, and a correspondence ensued between you and the British Government. But the Cabinet of London, which had perceived that war was about to be rekindled on the Continent, rejected all overtures towards negotiation. Sweden had refused to shut her ports against England; and Russia, in conformity to the stipulations of Tilsit, had declared war against her. The result to her was, the loss of Finland, which was united to the Russian empire; and at the same time the Russian armies occupied the fortresses on the Danube, and made war with effect upon the Turks.—Nevertheless, the system of England was triumphant. Her Orders in Council threatened to produce the most important results; and the tribute, which was to furnish the means of supporting the perpetual war which she had declared, was perceptible upon the seas. Holland and the Hanseatic Towns continuing to trade with her, their commerce frustrated the salutary and decisive regulations of the Decrees of Berlin and Milan, which alone were calculated to effectually resist the principles of the British Orders in Council. The execution of these Decrees could not be assured, but by the daily exercise of a firm and vigilant Administration. Unexposed to the influence of the enemy, Holland, and the Hanseatic Towns, it was necessary, should be united. But while the sentiments dearest to the heart of His Majesty yielded to the interest of his people and that of the Continent, great changes were taking place. Russia abandoned the principle to which she had pledged herself at Tilsit, viz. to make common cause with France, which she had proclaimed in her Declaration of War against England, and which had dictated the Decrees of Berlin and Milan.—They were evaded by the Ukase which opened the ports of Russia to all English ships laden with colonial produce, English property, provided that they were under a foreign flag. This unexpected blow annulled the Treaty of Tilsit, and those important transactions which had put an end to the struggle between the two greatest Empires of the World, and which had afforded to Europe a probability of obtaining a maritime peace. Approaching commotions and bloody wars were of course to

be immediately expected.—The conduct of Russia at this time was constantly directed towards these fatal results. The uniting of the Duchy of Oldenburgh, dove-tailed, as it were, into the countries recently brought under the same principles of Government as France, was a necessary consequence of the uniting of the Hanseatic Towns. An indemnity was offered. This object was easy to regulate with reciprocal advantage. But your Cabinet made an affair of State of it; and, for the first time, was seen a Manifesto of an ally against an ally.—The reception of English vessels in Russian ports, and the regulations of the Ukase of 1810, had made it known that the treaties were dissolved. The Manifesto showed that not only the bonds which had united the two Governments were broken, but that Russia had publicly thrown the gauntlet to France, for a difficulty which was foreign to her, and which could not be solved but by the method which His Majesty had proposed.—It was not to be concealed that the refusal of this offer disclosed the project of a rupture already formed. Russia prepared for it at the very time that she was dictating terms of peace to Turkey; she suddenly recalled five divisions of the army of Moldavia: and, in the month of February 1811, it was known at Paris that the army of the Duchy of Warsaw had been obliged to repass the Vistula, in order to fall back upon the Confederation, because the Russian armies, on the frontiers, were so numerous, and had assumed so menacing a posture.—When Russia had resolved on measures contrary to the interests of the active war which she had to support—when she had imparted to her armies a development burdensome to her finances, and without any object, in the situation in which all the Powers of the Continent were then placed, all the French troops were within the Rhine, except a corps of 40,000 men, stationed at Hamburgh for the defence of the coasts of the North Sea, and for the maintenance of tranquillity in the countries recently united; the reserved places in Prussia were occupied only by the Allied troops. A garrison of only four thousand men had remained at Dantzic; and the troops of the Duchy of Warsaw were on the peace establishment, a part of them even was in Spain.—The preparations of Russia then were without object, unless she entertained an expectation to impose upon France by a grand array of forces, and to oblige her to put an end to the discussions respecting

Oldenburgh, by sacrificing the existence of the Duchy of Warsaw; perhaps, also, Russia, not being able to disguise from herself the fact of her having violated the Treaty of Tilsit, had recourse to force, for no other purpose but to seek to justify violations which could not be defended.—His Majesty nevertheless remained unmoved (impossible). He persevered in his desire of an arrangement: he was of opinion, that at any period it would be time enough to resort to arms; he required only that powers should be sent to Prince Kurakin, and that a negociation should be opened with respect to these differences, which might be thus easily terminated, and which were by no means of a nature to call for the effusion of blood. They were reducible to the four following points:—1st. The existence of the Duchy of Warsaw, which had been a condition of the peace of Tilsit, and which, since the close of 1809, gave Russia occasion to manifest those instances of defiance to which His Majesty answered with condescension, carried as far as the most exacting friendship could desire, and honour could allow.—2d. The annexation of Oldenburgh, which the war against England had rendered necessary, and which was conformable to the spirit of the Treaty of Tilsit.—3d. The Legislation respecting trade in English merchandises and denationalized vessels, which ought to be regulated according to the spirit and the terms of the Treaty of Tilsit.—4th. Lastly, the dispositions of the Ukase of 1810, which, by destroying all the commercial relations of France with Russia, and opening her ports to simulated flags freighted with English property, were contrary to the letter of the Treaty of Tilsit.—Such would have been the objects of the negociation.—As to what concerned the Duchy of Warsaw, His Majesty would have been forward to adopt a Convention, by which he would pledge himself not to encourage any enterprise which might have a tendency, directly or indirectly, to lead to the re-establishment of Poland.—As to Oldenburgh, he offered to accept the intervention of Russia, which nevertheless had no right to interfere in what involved a Prince of the Confederation of the Rhine, and he agreed to give that Prince an indemnity.—With regard to commerce in English merchandises and to denationalized ships, His Majesty desired to come to some understanding, in order to reconcile the wants of Russia with the principles of the Continental System, and the spirit of the

Treaty of Tilsit.—And, lastly, as to the Ukase, His Majesty consented to conclude a Treaty of Commerce, which, in securing the commercial relations of France, would, at the same time, provide for all the interests of Russia.—The Emperor flattered himself, that such dispositions, dictated by so manifest a spirit of conciliation, would, at length, have led to an arrangement. But it was impossible to prevail upon Russia to grant the powers for opening a negociation.—She invariably answered all the new offers made to her by fresh armaments, and the conclusion was, at length, necessarily come to, that she refused to explain, because she had nothing to propose but what she dared not avow, and which could not be granted to her; that it was not any stipulations, which by identifying the Duchy of Warsaw still more with Saxony, and placing that Duchy in security from any commotions that might alarm Russia for the tranquillity of her provinces, that she was desirous to obtain, but the Duchy itself, which she wished to unite to herself: that it was not her own commerce, but that of the English which she wished to favour, in order to release England from the catastrophe which menaced her: that it was not for the interests of the Duke of Oldenburgh that Russia wished to interfere in the business respecting the annexation of that Duchy, but that it was an open quarrel with France that she wished to keep in reserve, till the moment of the rupture for which she was preparing.—The Emperor then became sensible that he had not a moment to lose. He also had recourse to arms. He took measures to oppose army to army, in order to guarantee a State of the second order so often menaced, and which reposed all its confidence upon his protection and good faith.—Nevertheless, Count, His Majesty still continued to avail himself of every opportunity to manifest his sentiments. He declared publicly, on the 15th of August last, the necessity of arresting the very dangerous course in which affairs were proceeding, and wished to attain that object by arrangements, for which he never ceased to request that a negociation should be entered into.—Towards the close of the month of November following, His Majesty believed he might indulge the hope that this view was at length likely to be participated in by your Cabinet. It was announced by you, Count, to the Ambassador of His Majesty, that M. de Nes-

selrode was destined to proceed to Paris with instructions. Four months elapsed before His Majesty was apprized that this mission would not take place. He instantly sent for Colonel Czernichew, and gave him a letter to the Emperor Alexánder, which was a fresh endeavour to open negotiations. M. de Czernichew arrived on the 10th of March at St. Petersburg, and that letter still remains unanswered.—How is it possible longer to dissemble that Russia evades all approximation? For eighteen months she has made it a constant rule to lay her hand upon her sword whenever propositions for an arrangement have been made to Russia.—Seeing himself thus constrained to abandon every hope from Russia, His Majesty, before he should commence this contest in which so much blood must be shed, felt it to be his duty to address himself to the English Government. The distress felt by England, the agitations to which she is a prey, and the changes which have taken place in her Government, decided His Majesty to take this course. A sincere desire of peace dictated the proceeding, which I have received orders to communicate to you. No agent had been sent to London, and there has been no other communications between the two Governments. The letter, of which your Excellency will find a copy annexed, and which I addressed to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of His Britannic Majesty, had been sent by sea to the Commandant on the Dover station.—The course which I now take towards you, Count, is a consequence of the dispositions of the Treaty of Tilsit, with which His Majesty has the wish to comply till the last moment. If the overtures made to England should produce any result, I shall take the earliest opportunity to make it known to your Excellency. His Majesty the Emperor Alexander will participate in the business, either in consequence of the Treaty of Tilsit, or as an ally of England, if his relations with that country be already adjusted.—I am formally commanded, Count, to express, in concluding this dispatch, the wish already communicated by His Majesty to Colonel Czernichew, to see those negotiations, which, during eighteen months, he has never ceased to solicit, prevent, at length, those events which humanity would have so much reason to deplore.—Whatever may be the situation of things when this letter shall reach your Excellency, Peace will still depend upon the determinations of

your Cabinet. — I have the honour, Count, to offer you the assurance of my high consideration.

THE DUKE OF BASSANO.

Copy of a Note from Prince Kurakin to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.—Paris, 18 (30) April, 1812.

My Lord Duke,—Since the interview which I had on Tuesday last with your Excellency, and in the course of which you gave me reason to suppose that the verbal communications which I had the honour of making, according to the tenor of my latest instructions, should be admitted as the grounds of the arrangements on which we are about to enter; since that time I have not been able to find you at home, and enter into a second conference, in order to the discussion of this object, and the settling the project of this convention. — It is impossible for me, my Lord, to defer any longer transmitting to the Emperor, my master, an account of the execution of the orders he has given me. I acquitted myself verbally towards his Majesty the Emperor and King, in the private audience which he granted me on Monday. I also acquitted myself in the same manner towards your Excellency, in my interview with you on Friday, Monday, and Tuesday. I flattered myself, that the agreement to a project of convention, founded upon a basis which I had the honour to propose, and which I had hoped would be agreeable to his Majesty the Emperor and King, would put it in my power to prove immediately to his Majesty the Emperor, my master, that I had fulfilled his intentions, and had the good fortune to have done so successfully. Deprived for two days of the power of seeing your Excellency, of following up and concluding, in conjunction with you, a work so important and so urgent, in consequence of the circumstances that are to be submitted to us, that not a single day should be lost; and seeing the certainty overthrown with which I had flattered myself that this work would be finished without delay, and which might lead to the conclusion that it ought to have, namely, that of preventing the fatal consequences of the close approach which has been made by the army of his Majesty the Emperor and King to that of

the Emperor, my master, it now remains for me to provide for my responsibility towards my Court, by officially acquitting myself, in the communication which I have received orders to make to your Excellency, and which hitherto have been only made verbally. — I am ordered to declare to your Excellency, that the preservation of Prussia, and her independence from every political engagement directed against Russia, is indispensable to the interests of his Imperial Majesty. In order to arrive at a real state of peace with France, it is necessary that there should be between her and Russia a neutral country, which shall not be occupied by the troops of either of the two powers; that as the entire policy of his Majesty the Emperor, my master, is calculated to preserve solid and stable principles of amity with France, which cannot subsist so long as foreign armies continue to be quartered so near the Russian frontiers, the first basis of negociation can be, no other than a formal engagement or a complete evacuation of the Prussian States, and of all the strong places of Prussia; whatsoever may have been the period and the pretext of their occupation by the French or Allied troops; of a diminution of the garrison of Dantzic; the evacuation of Swedish Pomerania, and an arrangement with the King of Sweden, calculated to give mutual satisfaction to the crowns of France and Sweden. — I must declare, that when the measures above-mentioned shall be acquiesced in on the part of France, as the basis of the arrangement to be concluded, I shall be permitted to promise, that such arrangements may include, on the part of his Majesty the Emperor, my master, the following engagements: — Without deviating from the principles adopted by the Emperor of all the Russias for the commerce of his States, and for the admission of neutrals into the ports of his dominions—principles which his Majesty can never renounce, he binds himself, as a proof of his adherence to the alliance formed at Tilsit, not to adopt any change of the prohibitive measures established in Russia, and severely observed to the present time, against direct trade with England. His Majesty is also ready to agree with his Majesty the Emperor of the

(*To be continued.*)